

Tank Cottage
South Tenth Avenue at West Fifth Street
Green Bay
Brown County
Wisconsin

HABS No. WIS-165

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Eastern Office, Division of Design and Construction
143 South Third Street
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

TANK COTTAGE

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Street Address: South Tenth Avenue at West Fifth Street, Green Bay, Brown County, Wisconsin

Present Owners: Special Tank Cottage Committee of the City of Green Bay

Present Use: Museum; open to visitors

Brief Statement of Significance: This is the oldest existing house in Wisconsin.

Historical and Architectural Information

The story-and-a-half center portion of the house was built in 1776 by Joseph Le Roi, French voyageur and fur trader. In 1805 the house was purchased by Judge Jacques Porlier, Wisconsin's first school teacher, who was also in the fur trade. In 1850 it was sold to Otto Tank, who was the son of a Norwegian nobleman (Carsten Tank) and had formerly served as a Moravian missionary in New Guinea. Otto Tank attempted to found a Moravian colony called "Ephraim" in Green Bay and organized a school. It was he who added the one-story wings at either side of the house.

The middle section of the house was originally of wattle and daub construction and the wings of wood frame. The entire building has been covered with wood clapboards.

Reference: Richard W. E. Perrin, Historic Wisconsin Architecture (Milwaukee: Wisconsin Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, August 1960), page 30.

James C. Massey, Architect
National Park Service
October 1961